

# **MINUTES OF SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

**APRIL 26, 2026**

*Recorded and submitted by Becca Hutcheson*

## **1. Call to Order, Appointment of Secretary, Parliamentarian, and Tellers; and confirmation of Quorum**

Chuck Harwood, Moderator, called the meeting to order at 11:00 am. He recognized the Parliamentarian (Eric Valpey), Secretary (Becca Hutcheson), and Head Teller (Sooraj Kuttykrishnan), then thanked the large number of UUC staff and volunteers involved in the search process and the special congregational meeting.

He announced that with 499 members in good standing and significantly more than 50 members in attendance, the 10% quorum required by our Bylaws to conduct business at a special congregational meeting was met.

For opening words Rev. Elisabeth Geschiere read a poem, “Widening Circles,” by Rainier Maria Rilke.

The Moderator then reviewed the purpose of the meeting, the process for voting, the use of Robert’s Rules of Order, and how individuals watching the meeting via livestream could contribute questions or comments during the discussion period.

One member (Lisa Maurer) asked about how people watching via livestream could vote. The Moderator responded that members watching via livestream were able to vote during the absentee voting period.

## **2. Approval of the agenda**

The Moderator then reviewed the agenda. A motion to approve the agenda was made and seconded, and then approved without objection.

## **3. Ministerial Search Committee Report**

The Moderator introduced Hugh Kimball, President of the UUC Board of Trustees, who thanked the congregation for their patience with the search process, Rev. Doug Wadkins for his leadership during the interim period, UUC staff and volunteers, and the Ministerial Search Team (MST). He then shared his hopes for the congregation moving forward.

Hugh then introduced Rosemary Daszkiewicz & Steve Carlson who provided the MST Committee Report. After recognizing the other MST members (Sallie Dacey, Greta Essig, Roberta Ray, Laurie Mann, Michelle Vaughn) Rosemary summarized the Search process, starting with the congregation’s vote to form and entrust the MST in leading the process last summer to the work done in the fall to engage the congregation through surveys and small

group gatherings to articulate “where we have been, are now, and aspire to.” This information was analyzed and incorporated the UUC Congregational Record which was reviewed by all prospective candidates in December. The MST then reviewed over 20 applicants’ packets, applications and sermons in January and invited the top 3 candidates to visit in March.

For making this discernment they used the following 6 criteria that emerged as significant themes while compiling the Congregational Record:

1. Ministerial identity and formation
2. Worship leadership and theology
3. Leadership, collaboration and shared ministry
4. Pastoral presence and congregational life
5. Justice, antiracism and UU identity
6. Vision, change, and adaptive leadership

Specifically, the MST was looking for the following qualities in a candidate: Heart and presence (worship and how it is done, demeanor and pastoral presence) and leadership and justice (demonstrated courage and spirit of collaboration, the ability to manage through conflict, and commitment to what we stand for).

The MST then ranked the three candidates based on these criteria and who they felt would be the “best fit minister” for UUC at this moment in UUC’s history. During this same time the three candidates were engaged in a similar discernment process and ranked their potential congregations based on their own criteria. At the end of March the MST was notified that UUC had a match between our rankings and the rankings of the candidates.

Rosemary then reviewed the ways that the MST felt Jeremiah Kalendae met these 6 criteria, emphasizing their spiritual depth, professional training and experience, and their love centered commitment to ministry and interfaith work. In sum she described how the MST felt Jeremiah is a “kind and loving soul who can connect with, inspire us, and walk with us into the future”.

She then reviewed logistics, including how if the congregation votes to call Rev. Jeremiah they will start on August 17, 2026, how their starting salary was established, and the incorporation of dedicated time off (2 off days per week, 4 weeks of vacation per year, and 4 weeks of study leave per year). She noted that explicitly incorporating 2 dedicated days off per week was a new addition to the UUC senior minister’s contract and a new practice for most UU congregations.

She ended by sharing that the MST joyfully recommends Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae be called as our Senior Minister.

#### **4. Motion to Call Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae**

Nicholas Eddington moved that “the congregation of UUC call Rev Jeremiah Kalendae to be our senior minister.” The motion was seconded. The Moderator then thanked the MST for their hard work and opened the floor to discussion.

- Jane Saddler asked if there was a percentage of “yes” votes needed for the candidate to come to UUC. The Moderator responded that there are 3 requirements for calling a senior minister (per our Bylaws). First, the vote must occur using written ballots. Second, 40% of members in good standing at UUC must vote. And third, 80% of members who vote must approve the candidate.
- John Webber asked about how the Moderator will address “spoiled” ballots in terms of the 40% participation – i.e., the ballots that did not vote either yes or no. The Moderator responded that the only two options were “yes” or “no” and ballots that did not include a vote or had a write-in candidate would not be included in the 40% vote requirement.
- Leila Zelnick asked if the 4 weeks of leave and 4 weeks of study leave is a new addition to the senior minister contract. Rosemary responded that she did not know what was in the prior senior minister’s contract but that he never took all of his allowed vacation.
- Elisabeth Geschiere offered a clarification that the UUA is comprised of congregations across the globe, not just in the US.

## 5. Vote

There being no further discussion, the Moderator repeated the motion and called for the vote. Dwight Beckmeyer provided a musical interlude.

The Moderator announced that the motion to call Rev. Jeremiah Kalendae was approved with **255 YES** votes and **3 NO** votes. With 98.8% voting in favor the vote exceeded the 80% minimum required by the Bylaws.

## 6. Closing

The President of the Board of Trustees announced that there would now be a reception in Nathan Johnson Hall. Deborah Raible provided closing remarks and shared a poem by Rev. Dr. David Breeden titled, “Us. Here.” (<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/litany/us-here>)

The Moderator then called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was made and seconded, and the meeting adjourned without objection at 12:23pm.